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ABSTRACT

The Indian Education Legal Support Project emphasizes the legal rights of tribes to control the formal education of their members. The project's work includes developing tribal education laws and reforming state and national Indian education legislation. This document examines federal and state statutory provisions on tribal education departments and details their legislative history. Following a brief overview of tribal education departments in the 1980s and 1990s, specific provisions of various federal laws are reviewed, including the Education Amendments of 1984 to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, and other public laws and resolutions. These laws are primarily concerned with federal funding of tribal education departments, their treatment as local education agencies, provision of training and technical assistance, research on at-risk students, access to the Internet, and collaboration among tribes and other educational institutions and agencies. Wisconsin is the only state with legislation specifically mentioning tribal education departments. This law calls for tribal input in the appointment of an advisory committee on American Indian language and culture programs. (SV)

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